

THE GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

HE WAS A LINEAL DESCENDANT OF SAMUEL LINCOLN, OF HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS.

New facts which are true facts touching the origin and noble life of Abraham Lincoln are invaluable contributions to history. Since the Christian era no other man has lived whose public services have so profoundly excited the gratitude of his countrymen, and so stirred their interest in the details of his career from its commencement to its close.

So far as these details are true they are more to be desired than much fine gold. False history is detrimental in proportion to the importance of the subject. Mr. Lincoln is regarded by many as our greatest American. He has inspired the ambition of the writers of much that is purely imaginative. Instead of becoming exalted by the draughts made upon them or by lapse of time, the sources of this kind of history become more productive as he grows in the public esteem. The number of those who are touched with the *coccythos seribendi* grows with the passing years. These writers seem to think that the publication of a conversation had or overheard with him in some way increases their own importance. They are rushing into print with these alleged conversations in increasing numbers. Because statements made in a conversation when none but the parties to it were present cannot be contradicted by witnesses, they assume that it is safe to exploit almost any of their own inventions by giving one of these conversations as its origin. Such writers are intolerable nuisances. They are makers of false records—of false facts, as matters deserving of punishment as the counterfeiters of the gold coin of the republic.

"If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book," was the sentence of the highest of all law-givers upon the falsifiers of history. Mr. Lincoln is a noble and good man, and taking anything away from the truth concerning Abraham Lincoln deserves a condemnation equally severe. I will cite a single instance of such a crime. Only a few months since one of these writers published the statement that *he heard* Mr. Lincoln say that when he was about eighteen years old *he* moved to Kentucky, and that he had been all winter helping a man distill whiskey; that he received two barrels of the liquid for his wages; that he paid the freight on his whiskey, and some tobacco for which he had exchanged one barrel, by working his passage to New Orleans on a flat-boat, etc. Now, as Mr. Lincoln's biographers, and Mr. Lincoln with his own pen, have written that he was removed from Kentucky to Indiana in the autumn of 1816, when he was *only seven years old*, it is quite safe to say that at that age he had not distilled much whiskey, and that this writer never heard such a statement from Mr. Lincoln, or he proposes to unmake history. It is unnecessary to add that the other ascriptions to the same communication are equally absurd and contradictory to Mr. Lincoln's own statements. But I have noted too much space to a statement which has no value except as a warning.

The genealogy of Mr. Lincoln is another subject which has produced much misrepresentation, accepted by some as the truth who ought to have subjected it to criticism.

Ever since his death a small number of writers have devoted themselves to the self-imposed task of proving that Mr. Lincoln had no ancestry—that he sprang from the shiftless class known at that time as the "poor whites of the South." They seem to think it a credit to themselves to establish this as a fact of history. The "poor whites of the South" are noted for their utter destitution of all mental energy; they had not the slightest desire to elevate their own condition. No man of any note ever came from their race. Mr. Lincoln, with his own pen, has written being the only exception ever known—the only flag gathered from this thistle—was a frank of nature, an abnormal product which came, opposed to and in spite of the laws which govern nature.

In any ordinary case the improbability of this story would condemn it, and a line of the matter, whose judgment it is that the Gettysburg speech has been as perfect an example of our English speech as has ever been written. It is credible that the mind which conceived that address was an accident—a freak of nature? That would make it a miracle, and the day of miracles has passed.

I do not expect to contribute any new evidence on the subject of the Lincoln genealogy. The work of collecting such evidence has been faithfully done by others. It is in print, and not very difficult of access. But it is to be found in books and magazines exclusively devoted to the subject of genealogy, which have little popular interest, while that which tends to show that he had no ancestry is published in the newspapers which have a wider circulation and a larger circle of readers. I shall be quite satisfied if I succeed in condensing the reliable proofs—in putting them in a more simple and popular form, and in pointing out to the careful inquirer where he may find and consider the evidence for himself.

Before we enter upon the general subject let us briefly consider the probabilities. Suppose we were in search of the maker of a machine of the most exquisite finish and perfect adjustment of which materials are capable. We are shown a manufacturing establishment from which for more than a century the most skilled workmen have been turning out similarly perfect machines. Over against it is a rude furnace in which unskilled men are making pig-iron. We show the maker of the machine the perfect machine. So here, when we find a family the ancestor of which came to our shores because he loved liberty, and desired to live under a popular government, which for more than a century has produced great generals in times of war, great judges, legislators and statesmen in times of peace, and great soldiers for freedom and equal rights at all times, and near it a colony of "poor white trash" which never produced a man of any ability or noted for anything—should we answer haltingly when asked from which of these sources came Abraham Lincoln? One conclusion is inescapable. If the lineage of our great American begins with a "poor white," we ought to find that poor white out and make him a known celebrity, for it was one of his posterity who restored the Federal Union and made it perpetual.

In tracing his genealogy Mr. Lincoln himself is our first

witness. In a biography written by himself in 1860 (see his works, by Nicolay and Hay, vol. i, p. 638) he writes: "His father, Thomas, and his grandfather, Abraham, were born in Rockingham County, Virginia, whither their ancestors had come from Berks County, Pennsylvania. His lineage has been traced no farther back than this. The family were originally Quakers. The grandfather, Abraham, had four brothers—Isaac, Jacob, John, and Thomas." These, he says, at p. 630, same volume, "were born in Pennsylvania." In the same volume, at p. 598, he says, speaking of these ancestors, "An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like."

There was in New England a family of Lincolns whose names "fill the pages of local and commonwealth history with the story of their services in the field, the town, the halls of legislation, and the council-chamber from an early day." It furnished generals in the old French war and in the Revolution. Two of its members were Governors of Massachusetts; another was Governor of Maine. It might well have produced President Lincoln. That it did number him among its descendants has been proved by a descendant, Samuel Shackford, Esq., of the Chicago bar, in his "Lineage of President Abraham Lincoln, traced from Samuel Lincoln," which the reader will find in the "English Historical and Genealogical Register, 1887," vol. xli, p. 133.

Samuel Lincoln came from Norfolk County, England, in 1637, to Salem, and on coming of age settled with others of the name in Hingham, Massachusetts. Of his ten children, Mordecai, the fourth son, was born at Hingham, June 17, 1657. He was a blacksmith by trade. He married Sarah, daughter of Abraham and Sarah (Whitman) Jones, of Scituate, near Hingham, where he afterwards engaged in the business of smelting iron. His children were Mordecai, junior, born April 24, 1686; Abraham, born January 14, 1691; Isaac, born October 21, 1694; and Sarah, born July 29, 1694. The frequency of the recurrence of the names Mordecai and Abraham in almost every generation of the family makes it important to keep these dates in mind.

The will of Mordecai Lincoln bears date March 3, 1727. It is the least valuable in money of his "son Mordecai," "son Abraham," and to the oldest son of each when he arrives at full age. His lands and personal property are devised to the other children.

Before the date of this will, and earlier than the year 1714, these two brothers disappear from the records of Hingham. Mordecai, the eldest, had written, and they afterwards lived in Massachusetts. The will of their father is consistent with the cash legacies to them seem to indicate their removal. At the date of this will the maker, who was the son of Samuel (hereinafter called the common ancestor), was an old man, and nearly a hundred years of age. His son, Mordecai, the son of Samuel, ended his life in Massachusetts, and his will was there proved. The Mordecai and Abraham who disappear from the records of Massachusetts were therefore the grandsons of Samuel Lincoln, and his story was as follows:

In the early part of the last century there was a considerable emigration from eastern Massachusetts to New Jersey. One colony settled a town in Middlesex County, which was named from their old pastor, Rev. John Woodbridge. About the same time Mordecai and Abraham Lincoln first came to the State of New Jersey, where they settled in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and vicinity. That these brothers were the grandsons of the common ancestor Samuel, who disappeared from Massachusetts, I think the evidence proves beyond any reasonable doubt.

Mordecai Lincoln married Hannah, daughter of Richard and Sarah, of Chester, in 1720. From this marriage, in Chester County, New Jersey, John Bowne, the uncle of said Hannah, by his will dated September 14, 1714, left to her, by the name of Hannah Lincoln, a legacy of £250. His estate was involved in litigation, to which Mordecai Lincoln was a party, and from which he was discharged in 1720. In 1720, Richard Bowne, by his will, conveyed to Mordecai Lincoln about five hundred acres of land, and describes the grantee as of Chester County, Pennsylvania.

A deed dated December 14, 1725, from Mordecai Lincoln, of Philadelphia, to the county of Chester, in the State of Pennsylvania, conveyed an undivided third of one hundred and six acres of land in said county, with the mills, forges, furnaces, ovens, and mines thereon. This deed, of record in the Department of Internal Affairs in Pennsylvania, shows that this Mordecai was interested in the making of iron, the same business in which his father was engaged in Scituate, Massachusetts.

Since it is through this Mordecai that the pedigree of the President is traced to the common ancestor, it is desirable to identify Abraham whom we find in Monmouth County, New Jersey, with the Abraham who left Massachusetts. On this point we find that the Massachusetts Abraham was a blacksmith. There is a deed recorded in Monmouth County, New Jersey, dated February 20, 1737, from "Abraham Lincoln, blacksmith," to one Williams, of lands in Creswick. The will of Abraham Lincoln, dated at Springfield, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, April 13, 1743, divides his estate among his seven children, four of whom, viz., Mordecai, Abraham, Isaac, and Sarah, bear the identical Old Testament names of the four children of his uncle Mordecai of Scituate, Massachusetts.

Several descendants of this Abraham have been members of the old Swedish Church in Philadelphia. The will of Mordecai Lincoln, of Anny, Philadelphia County, February 17, 1726, gives to his sons Mordecai and Thomas all his lands in Anny.

A deed of John Lincoln of record in the office of the Secretary of State in Trenton, New Jersey, describes the grantee as the son of Mordecai Lincoln, of Caranarvon, County of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and conveys lands which were "conveyed October 9, 1720, by Richard Salter to Mordecai Lincoln, and by him bequeathed to his said son John."

In 1758 John Lincoln sold a farm in Union Township, adjoining Exeter, in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and removed to that part of Augusta County, Virginia, which was in 1775 set off and named Rockingham County.

So far I have confined myself to the evidence collected by Mr. Shackford, exclusively from deeds and contemporary documents. It proves that Mordecai and Abraham

Lincoln, grandsons of Samuel, the common ancestor, left their native town, where the father of one was an iron-founder; of the other, a blacksmith. They belonged to families which used exclusively certain Old Testament names, especially those of Mordecai and Abraham. One of them gives to his four children four names which are identical with the names of the four children of Mordecai Lincoln of Scituate and Hingham—a coincidence reasonable enough between closely related families, but passing all bounds of probability between strange families. I assert, without fear of contradiction by any good lawyer, that this evidence proves that the Mordecai Lincoln whose son John sold his farm in Union Township, adjoining Exeter, in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and went to Augusta County, Virginia, in 1758, was a lineal descendant of Samuel Lincoln who came from Norfolk County, England, to Salem and thence to Hingham, Massachusetts, in 1637.

The martyred President, whose statement no one will question, says that his grandfather Abraham had four brothers—Isaac, Jacob, John, and Thomas. His grandfather, he says, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky in 1750 or 1753, or a year or two later, he was killed by an Indian, leaving a widow and five children. He was a man of family at that time, and must, from the dates, have been the son of the John Lincoln who went to Virginia in 1758, and was consequently the great-grandfather of the President. Having shown that John Lincoln was the son of Mordecai, the last link in the chain of descent is closed in strict conformity with the President's statement.

The President's statement that both his parents came of "undistinguished families," that the "effort to identify his ancestors with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as" those I have mentioned, and that his ancestors came from Berks County, Pennsylvania, deserves some attention.

Nothing was more characteristic of Mr. Lincoln than his humility in all that he did and said. He had given little thought to his descent. Such of his ancestors as he knew were woodsmen, Indian fighters, and hunters, and were undistinguished. His observation of the value of the similarity of names in tracing a genealogy shows his identity with the humblest of his countrymen. He knew his cities, Enoch, Levi, and Solomon, who did not find any where in the line, and if he had known that a name so unattractive as that of Mordecai was found with that of Abraham in every generation, it could have scarcely failed to make an impression on a mind so acute as his own.

It was accurate in the President's statement that his ancestors came from Berks County. The Lincoln of his great grandfather's time were men of affairs. The deeds show their ownership of lands in Monmouth and Middlesex counties, New Jersey, in Chester, Philadelphia, Lancaster, and Berks counties, Pennsylvania. Mr. David J. Lincoln, of Lancaster, a cousin, filled many public offices in the New York Tribune of March 3, 1895, shows that there were Lincolns in Berks County, and that they were not an undistinguished family. "President Lincoln's ancestors in Pennsylvania," he writes, "were prominent people. An Abraham Lincoln of Berks County, who was born in 1730 and died in 1806, held many public offices, being a member of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania from 1783 to 1786, a member of the State Convention of 1787, and a member of the State Constitutional Convention of 1790. President Lincoln has a number of relatives still living in eastern Pennsylvania, and they are prosperous people. David J. Lincoln, a cousin, resided at Birdsboro, Berks County, and an article from his pen, which was published in a Lancaster newspaper, on Abraham Lincoln's ancestry, was copied by Messrs. Nicolay and Hay in their admirable biography of Abraham Lincoln."

Abraham Lincoln, who in 1790 moved to Union Township, Lancaster County, is another cousin of President Lincoln. He is about eighty six years of age, and in general appearance is not unlike his distinguished relative, having the same large, erect, gaunt form and high cheek-bones. He is a farmer by occupation, and owns an estate called the Hill, which is in Hill, which is in Union Township, about two miles from the Berks County line. Mr. Lincoln has never held any public office, but has always followed the vocation of a farmer, tilling the soil with his own hands. He is much respected in the community, and is a fair specimen of the industrious, prosperous, intelligent farmer. It is no longer in doubt, that he is a Republican in politics, and in religion an Episcopalian.

The biographers of Mr. Lincoln, with a few conspicuous exceptions, have attributed his origin to the same New England family. Nicolay and Hay have asserted his descent from Samuel Lincoln without presenting the evidence on which the statement is made. Mr. Arnold, in his admirable life of his esteemed professional brother and very dear friend, has briefly given his correct genealogy, and has also done justice to his devoted mother. One who reads Mr. Arnold's account of her faithful training in his father's boyhood will have seen how he has his thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, why his name became a synonym for honesty, and why he never spoke of his mother without invoking a blessing upon her memory. Mr. Arnold believes in his lineal descent from Samuel Lincoln through an ancestral line of "rough, hardy, fearless men, familiar with woodcraft—who could endure the extremes of fatigue and exposure—who knew how to find food and shelter in the forest—brave, self-reliant, true, and faithful to their friends and dangerous to their enemies."

The descent of our martyred President from a New England family capable of producing such a man is proved by this evidence. It is no longer in doubt. No one can raise any objections to it which are worthy of consideration until he is able to point out wherein the evidence is defective. Two classes of men have been accustomed to speak loosely of Mr. Lincoln's origin, habits, and character. One class has been composed of men who have never seen the man, but undertake to write or speak of his history with little or no study of the authorities and the evidence, and with very little thought or reflection. Now that the repositories of the evidence are pointed out, and all may examine it for themselves, there is reason to hope that we shall have no more of this superficial and inconsistent

writing, and that the American mind will come to rest on the solid foundations of historical truth.

From the other class nothing is to be hoped. They comprise those who think they are called to write of Mr. Lincoln because, on a few occasions, they may have followed him as far as Peter followed the Saviour to the assembly of the Scribes and Elders—who gather up the rumors and falsehoods generated in the corrupted atmosphere of party strife, roll them like sweet morsels under their tongues, and then perpetuate them in print. To a few of these he unfortunately gave opportunity. They have repaid him by statements as incredible that all who knew Mr. Lincoln they carry their own antidote, and in some cases the very stories contain their own direct refutation. It is impossible to conceive what motive induced the first publication of these wicked libels; equally impossible to comprehend the spirit or purpose of their frequent repetition. There is only one way to deal with them, and that is to treat them with silent contempt. We cannot prevent the wounds they inflict upon the hearts of his surviving relatives in blood, or upon the multitudes who revere and love his memory. But while a grateful posterity is erecting new monuments to his fame, it should not forget that the few who have attempted to disgrace his progenitors or soil the memory of his beloved mother were the pretended friends of Abraham Lincoln; that while the preserver of our Union shares our gratitude equally with the teacher of his country, the same full measure of our respect and affection is due alike to the mother of Lincoln and the mother of Washington.

L. E. CRITTENDEN.

PLATTISM NOW A MORAL ISSUE.

The opposition to T. C. Platt in the Republican party of New York city has secured a place of vantage such as it never occupied before. Opposition to Platt is now simply a question of morals. It is no longer based on personal grounds, or even on grounds of political expediency. It is deeper than the question whether the Republican party shall exist for the sake of spoils or for the sake of good government. A new issue has arisen in the party. Platt and his subordinates have forced it, unwittingly of course, upon the minds of Republicans. That issue is: Shall outrageous fraud—fraud that even would cause a Tammany Hall heeler to quail, if it were discovered—be condoned? Shall the Republican party of New York city and State walk in the path of honesty or dishonesty, in the path of decency or indecency?

Platt's followers have committed fraud. It may have been without Platt's direct knowledge; it has been without even his indirect rebuke. His men have padded the party rolls in New York County to make sure that there shall be no opposition to Platt in the National Republican Convention. The plan is that if the Republicans win in the general election next fall, Platt shall have undisputed sway in the distribution of national patronage, as he has now with State patronage. Out of 77,000 names on the party rolls in New York city, 25,000 have been shown to be fraudulent. Platt's followers made up those rolls. They refused to let the rolls be the primary evidence for the control of the party machinery. They refused to let the party machinery be the primary evidence to delay the organization of the committee after it had been proved that gross fraud had affected its make-up. Not only were the names of Democrats placed upon the rolls but the Platt men, by direct means, secured the names of actual members of the Tammany Hall General Committee were found there. An alliance between Platt and Tammany Hall has always been one of the scandals of party management in New York city. The alliance would now seem to be proved beyond a doubt. In eleven Assembly districts the names of Democrats have been discovered on the rolls, and of these 1300 nearly 500 are the names of Tammany Hall committeemen. These names could not have got on the rolls without the direct and active assistance of the Platt men who had control of the rolls.

"What are you going to do about it?" asks the spirit of Spoils as it stalks through the Republican ranks. "Is it possible that you will antagonize the candidacy of Governor Morton for the Presidency? He commands universal respect and is admirably equipped for the Presidency. Are you going to put in jeopardy Republican success in a Presidential election for the sake of a few scraps about honesty? Do you mean to bolt?"

SOMETHING FOR GOVERNOR MORTON TO CONSIDER.

The answer to this question concerns the political careers of two men far more closely than it does that of those to whom the question is addressed. One of these is Governor Morton. The other is Platt. The problem for Governor Morton to solve is whether he can afford to go before the country as a candidate for the Presidency handicapped with the issue of Platt and the supremacy of Platt. If Governor Morton should be nominated for President he must know that Plattism would become, by the very force of circumstances, chief among the issues of the campaign. Platt, as well as sound money; Platt, as well as the tariff—would be heard from one end of the country to the other. Despite Governor Morton's protests that he would be President if elected, the people would be faced by the question whether the national patronage should be turned over to Platt, to be used as his treachery, vindictiveness, or ambition (not his public spirit, if such exists) might see fit.

Platt's future is directly concerned with these frauds in the party rolls, and the question of a bolt in the Republican party on the ground of common honesty lies more with him than with those who oppose him. The logical outcome of the situation is an opposition Republican organization. It is not going beyond the bounds of probability, and it is no violation of the rules of those who are in this newest and this morally strongest fight ever made against Platt, to say that a contesting delegation from the Congress districts in New York County will be sent to the St. Louis convention if Platt and his followers do not change front. This delegation will consist of men of national reputation. It will be for Governor Morton. For President they will be for him long after Mr. Platt, in his reach for spoils, has deserted him. The Governor refused recently to interfere in the struggle for decent methods in party management in New York city, but it will be for him to consider what may be the effect upon the delegates

of other States at St. Louis of twenty or more contesting delegates from this State protesting in the name of common honesty, against the methods of Governor Morton's chief supporter.

Platt has seemed long to capture the party machinery in New York city. His work in securing control of the party of the State is well known. He was baffled alone in the city. Three years ago he sent for John B. Milholland. He wanted to overthrow the city organization, then known as the Patterson machine. He inspired Milholland directly to get up a new organization. A Committee of Thirty, known as a United League Committee, set out at the same time to secure decent party management. Platt promised Milholland that he would see that the State Committee would recognize his faction. The price got too hot for Platt, and, opportunist as he always is, he made terms with the Patterson crowd, and both the Milhollandites and the Committee of Thirty men found themselves sitting outside in the cold, the Milhollandites especially a victim to Platt's treachery. He sacrificed close ties of loyalty and personal friendship to gain his end. That end was, as all of Platt's aims have been and probably will be, spoils. Governor Morton may be able to testify more about this subject next July than at present.

Then came a Republican victory in the State, which, in the first flush of enthusiasm, Platt ascribed to Providence. He had led the party to defeat for more than ten years, and had learned to play for a division of the spoils with the same skill as his reward for them to strive for victory. The revolt against Tammany came, as every one knows, in spite of Platt, and then Colonel Strong was elected Mayor. Platt and his cohorts moved on him and demanded practically a violation of the platform on which he was elected. Platt wanted to be the real Mayor of New York. The Platt men offered to show the Mayor how easy it was to be treacherous to the people. He refused to listen. Then they hounded him day and night. They made him feel the necessity of playing politics himself to defeat them, and then they had him. He could not play politics with them, because he would rather than strive for victory. They drove him into recognizing the anti-Platt faction, and then they set up a howl that he was injuring the "party," and they gathered about them all the "boys" who wanted offices and who saw no prospect of getting them. A contest arose for the control of the party machinery, and in the last that was led by his as to the Mayor's alleged promises, and in the mystery of numerous "conferences," the Platt men won by a slender majority. Mr. Lauterbach had named as the Platt master of ceremonies. The fall campaign arrived and Tammany won. Skillfully directed Mr. Lauterbach played the cards so that the banner of defeat would reach the Strong faction. He wanted to make it appear that devoted party men were so disgusted with the Strong administration that they remained away from the polls. There is no record that Mr. Platt and Mr. Croker met after election to congratulate each other, but there is no doubt that each had won a victory.

HOW THE ROLLS WERE "REVISED."

The election ended, the Lauterbach men started a movement to "revise the rolls." They did "revise" them, and they did it so shamelessly that a committee of well-known citizens headed by the police chief, and including such men as Joseph H. Choate, General Wager Swaine, Paul D. Cravath, Elihu Root, and others, protested, and asked that the primaries be postponed until the lists could be revised honestly. The result was a refusal from the County Committee, and the subsequent election of Mr. Lauterbach by the men who had championed the tainted lists. Mr. Lauterbach received 81 votes of the 132 cast, 51 committeemen refusing to vote. The Platt-Lauterbach "victory" was complete. A cry of fraud soon arose. Mr. Lauterbach then said, and he has since repeated it, that the lists would be purged, but in accordance with Platt's wish. His election was secure.

It was known that outrageous frauds had been committed in the primaries. Twenty-five leading Republicans got together and decided that something should be done. Money was not lacking. They employed Colonel N. X. Wits, an insurance attorney of long experience, to investigate the rolls. In eleven districts which he had time to go over before the Committee of Twenty-five met he found this astonishing percentage of fraudulent names: First Assembly district, 31 per cent.; fourth district, 43; sixth, 34; seventh, 34; eighth, 32; fourteenth, 29; sixth, 34; twelfth, 34; twenty-fifth, 34; twenty-sixth, 30; twenty-ninth, 34. It was found that in 380 of the 1381 election districts of the city the number of enrolled Republicans exceeded the vote of all the Republicans in those districts. It was also found that if the names had been purged from the rolls in the eleven Assembly districts the representation in the district conventions would have been reduced from 895 to 613. It was also found in these eleven Assembly districts that 1592 Democrats were enrolled, and that 486 of these were Tammany Hall committeemen. In every district there were found not only the names of dead men, those who had removed from the district, but "sundry names of other persons," but the names of hundreds of notorious persons.

The County Committee refused to heed the petition not to reorganize until after these frauds had been inquired into. The Committee of Twenty-five enlarged itself into one of Five Hundred and on Thursday night, January 30th, met to listen to the report as to the investigation of the frauds and to take action. It was decided to send a memorial to the State Committee asking that no primaries for the election of delegates to a State or to district conventions to nominate delegates to the St. Louis convention be held until the wrongs of the fraudulent enrollment be "redressed." The indictment of these wrongs is contained in this excerpt from the committee's report—An indictment such as was never brought in New York Republican councils before:

"The general conclusion drawn from the investigation, and from which the evidence leaves no possible avenue of escape, is that the men in control of the county organization have devised and carried through a deliberate and systematic fraud intended to secure for themselves, without regard to the will of the majority of the Republican voters, the absolute control of the organization and of the delegates from the county to the State Convention. The fraud was not sporadic. It was so general throughout the city, the methods were so similar, and the work was so skillfully concealed as to make it impossible to trace any single case. The purpose, that the proof of a carefully prearranged plan is irresistible."

"Another item of the same plan, as indicated by our investigation, is that the men who had charge of the scheme for the wholesale padding of the Republican rolls and the debauching of the

primaries, received deliberate and systematic co-operation from the local Tammany Hall leaders. In the districts where the padding was the worst it was found that in almost every election district one or more members of the Tammany Hall General Committee, or of the Tammany Hall District Committee, enrolled themselves as Republicans and secured with them a band of Tammany followers, varying in numbers from a few to a hundred, and such important results followed. The conclusion that it was the deliberate purpose of those in control of Tammany Hall to lend their active aid and co-operation in carrying through the fraudulent scheme to perpetuate the power of those now in control of the Republican party machinery in this city."

All this is the legitimate outgrowth of Plattism. In his desire for power the "Easy Boss" has overreached himself. He has not only shown but has proved that there is no difference between his methods and Crokers'. "Get the offices, get the offices," is the cry of each. Their motives are practically the same. It is their aim to build up political machines by the use of government patronage to their own personal advantage. The belief is general that Platt, at least, has always spent all the money that has come to him through his grip on the party machinery. It is a common charge, however, that he has taken exorbitations by the throat and has forced political "contributions" from them. Croker gets credit for doing and having done the same. The political methods of these two men are identical. Whatever difference there may be between them is simply one of degree. Not once in their careers has there been a note of genuine regard for the public good. There has been no attempt to do anything either to reduce public burdens by abolishing useless offices or by practicing economy in public expenditures. Platt government and Croker government are synonymous terms. They both mean official corruption, because they both exist simply for spoils.

EXPLANATION OF PLATT'S METHODS.

Platt's political methods are to be interpreted along three lines: First, ambition for supremacy in his party—a legitimate ambition if honest methods are used; second, the desire of reform and of good government; and third, to interfere with spoils, without which, according to his theory, parties cannot exist; third, personal vindication—something that he has striven for ever since the "Me Too" days of Conkling's rule.

Platt's ambition to rule the party has led it to defeat after defeat. Finally Republican success of it beheaded. Democratic misrule could not be tolerated longer. Mr. Cornelius N. Bliss said recently that Platt has meant "rule or ruin" always. He has "ruined" in the State until there is practically no one to oppose him, and now he has begun similar tactics in New York city. It is now a question with city Republicans whether they should not be "ruined" instead of the party, if he insists on ruling by fraud.

Platt's opposition to reform, or to legislation solely for the public good, is not only to be seen in his attitude toward Mayor Strong, but in his entire political career. He has absolute control of the Legislature this year, as he had last year. What did he do last year for the people? Ballot reform was wrung from him, but not until he had made it an agent in fixing tighter than ever the grip of party machinery on the body-politic. He refused to give the purpose of his attack on his political pickings. In short, he is making precisely the same blunder that Hill, Sheehan, and Murphy made—that of thinking offensive partisanship is popular with the people, and that the "boys" are really the people. Even should there be no bolt against Platt, there can be no doubt that he and his followers are heading straight for the precipice over which Hill, Sheehan, and Murphy plunged with Maynard.

When we consider Platt's desire for personal vindication we come nearer to the real Platt than at any other time. Ridicule has cut him to the quick. He can never "Me Too" his way out of the mire he has dug himself into. To get back into the mud he must, of course, be a vindication, and there are indications that he may have to resort to such a move to secure the certificate of public approval that he craves. But to be Secretary of the Treasury would be a greater vindication. He stated recently, in some private conversation, that he would again be heading straight for the precipice over which Hill, Sheehan, and Murphy plunged with Maynard. There are immense contracts and other superb opportunities in the Treasury for playing politics, and Platt knows them all. It would be a pity, his followers think, if he should finally have to take up with the Senatorship and its petty control of the national patronage in New York State.

And yet Platt went through the form of intimating, in an interview with himself which he had published on January 27th, that he was not a candidate for any office under a national administration. He was careful not to say so directly. In the same interview he said that the present reform administration in New York city is "a thousand times more disgraceful" than that of Tammany Hall. No one but a child or an insane person would believe such a statement. To be as bad as Tammany would be terrible indeed, but that reform government is a thousand times more disgraceful! Bosh!

It is the man who uses such absurd and exaggerated language who declares that his interest "in politics consists only in my ardent and heart-felt desire for the triumph of Republican principles." He would take it for granted that it is worth when this man places his hand over his heart, raises his eyes toward Heaven, and with a low-pitched voice makes this reference to the Deity in connection with party management:

"And I propose to labor for Republican success with such ability as the Maker has endowed me so long as He shall give me life."

Commenting on the presumption of Platt to lead the Republicans by reason of supremacy gained by fraud, the chief Republican newspaper in opposition to him said recently that his fraud was his only chance for winning a place then Croker would have in calling a Republican convention to order, or "Paddy" Dwyer in preaching in Dr. Parkhurst's pulpit.

Plattism truly has become an issue in morals.

FRANKLIN MATTHEWS.